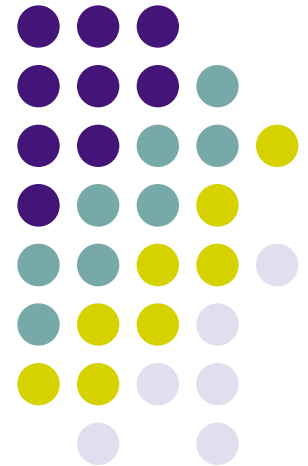
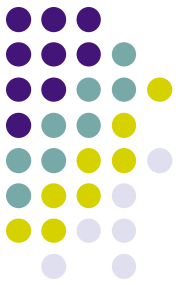


From Subject to Thesis Statement

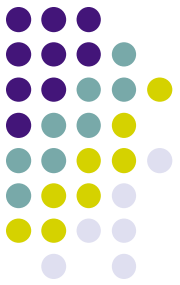




Terminology

- Subject area
 - A large category where your topic is located
 - Ex. Subject = Civil liberties
- Topic
 - The definitive issue the paper deals with
 - Ex. Topic = 1960' s Civil Rights Movement
- Thesis
 - An assertion of the topic
 - Ex. Without Martin Luther King Jr, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960' s would have been unsuccessful.

Subject versus Topic



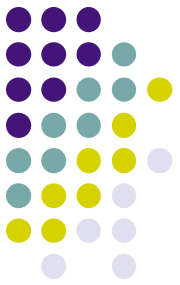
Subject

1. **Agricultural Production**
2. **Genetic Research**
3. **Drug abuse**

Topic

1. **The effect of mechanization on farm employment.**
2. **Major developments in genetic research since 1962.**
3. **Behavioral effects of marijuana.**

Start thinking about how you can turn your topic into a question.



What is a thesis statement?

It is the central message of the essay

It's the essay's main idea

It prepares the readers for what follows in the essay

States the essay's topic

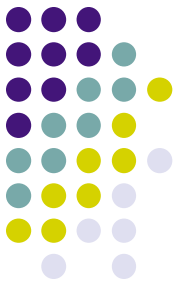
States the essay's purpose – to persuade, inform

Indicates the focus – presents your point of view

It uses specific language, not vague words

It may briefly state the major subdivisions (topics of each paragraph) of the essay's topic.

A good thesis statement includes:

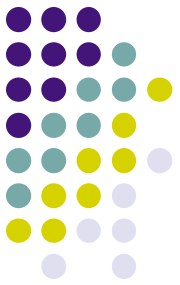


Subject that two people might potentially disagree on

Corresponds clearly with the assignment and can be adequately treated given the nature of the assignment

Expresses one main idea

Asserts your conclusions about the subject



Step 1

What do you notice
about your topic????

What do you notice?

What do you notice?

What do you notice?

What do you notice?

What do you notice?

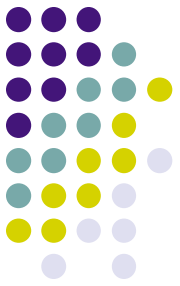
What do you notice?

What do you notice?

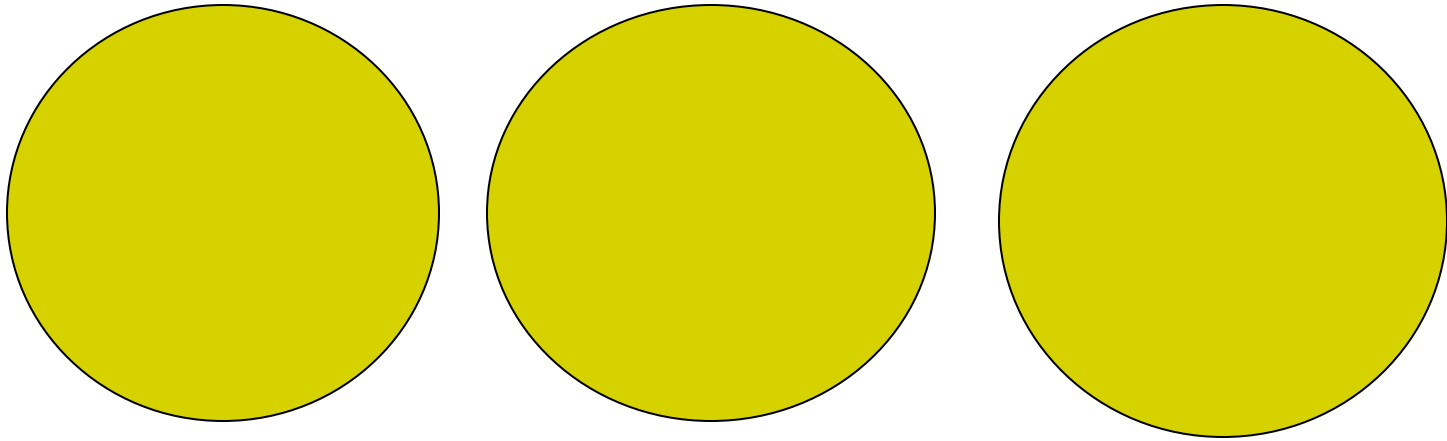
What do you notice? What do you notice?

What do you notice?

Step 2



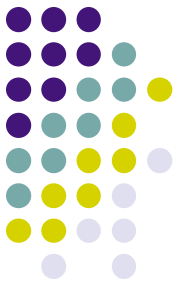
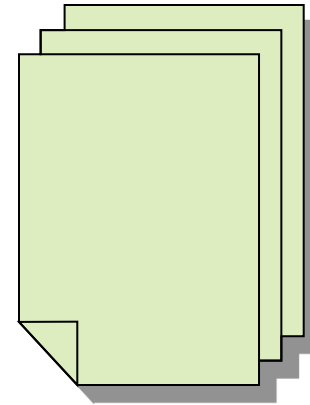
What 3 details are the most interesting?



What three details are more interesting, significant, revealing or strange?

Step 3

Why are they the 3 most interesting details?



Write down why they struck you as the most interesting. This step is to analyze your topic. Don't generalize or jump to judgment.

After you have determined the most interesting subtopics, make an assertion – a sentence stating your topic and the point you want to make about it.

If you are having trouble coming up with an assertion, change your topic into a question that your essay can answer. After you have created the question, develop the answer.

Having Trouble?

Turn your topic into a question (or multiple questions).

The answer to the question is the thesis statement for the essay.



Q: “What are the potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class?”

A: “The potential benefits of using computers in a fourth-grade class are”

OR

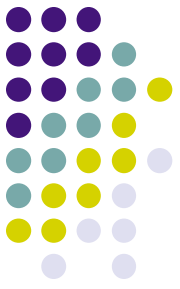
A: “Using computers in a fourth-grade class promises to improve . . . “



Test Your Question

- Determine as many questions as possible
 - No question is too broad or narrow in the early stages
- Treat each question as a “possibility”
- Test each question with these others:
 - Is the question or answer plausible enough to be made convincing?
 - Is the question sufficiently challenging?
 - Is the question within your reach, given the limitations on time, your access to pertinent information, and the length of the assignment?
- Do not forget Who, What, When, Where, and Why if you are stuck.

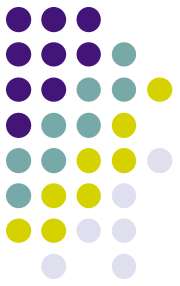
An example: Start to Finish Subject and Topics



- **Subject:** College Education
- **Topics:** upward mobility, first-generation, consumerism, price of books, tuition costs, overall college costs, availability of financial aid, technology, preparedness
 - *Choose preparedness*

An example:

Questions and Answers



- Does high school adequately prepare students for college?
 - Answer: No, high school does not adequately prepare students for college.
- What do students need to be prepared for college?
 - Answer: High school students need to be made aware of the demands required to receive a college education.
- What consequences result from underprepared students?
 - Answer: Underprepared college students usually do not succeed in college; some even fail out.

An example: Thesis Statements

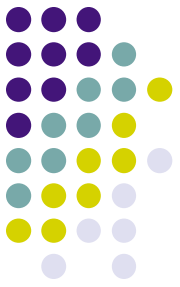


- **Thesis statements:**

- High schools fail to prepare students for entrance into college; therefore, colleges should offer more remedial courses.
- The lack of prepared freshman entering American universities indicates a need for high school teachers and counselors to reiterate the rigors of college curricula.
- High schools fail to prepare students for entrance into college; therefore, many students fail to finish.

An example:

All together now...



Q: Does high school adequately prepare students for college?

A: No, high school does not adequately prepare students for college.

T: High schools fail to prepare students for entrance into college; therefore, colleges should offer more remedial courses.

Q: What do students need to be prepared for college?

A: High school students need to be made aware of the demands required to receive a college education.

T: The lack of prepared freshman entering American universities indicates a need for high school teachers and counselors to reiterate the rigors of college curricula.

Q: What consequences result from underprepared students?

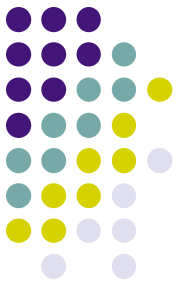
A: Underprepared college students usually do not succeed in college; some even fail out.

T: High schools fail to prepare students for entrance into college; therefore, many students fail to finish.

A strong thesis takes some sort of stand.

Which thesis statement below takes a stand?

How do you know?



There are some negative and positive aspects to the Banana Herb Tea Supplement.

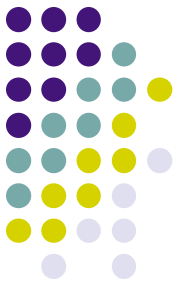
Vs.

Banana Herb Tea Supplement promotes rapid weight loss that results in the loss of muscle and lean body mass, and therefore poses a potential danger to customers.

A strong thesis justifies discussion.

Which thesis statement below justifies discussion?

How do you know?



My family is an extended family.

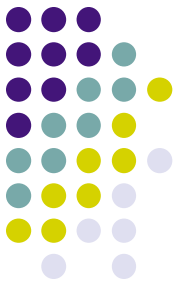
Vs.

While most American families would view extended family as a burden, African American families rely on extended family for support.

A strong thesis expresses one main idea.

Which thesis statement below expresses one main idea?

How do you know?



Companies need to exploit the marketing potential of the Internet, and web pages can provide both advertising and customer support.

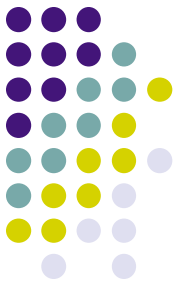
Vs.

Because the Internet is filled with tremendous marketing potential, companies should exploit this potential by using web pages that offer both advertising and customer support.

A strong thesis is specific.

Which thesis statement below is specific?

How do you know?



World hunger has many causes and effects.

Vs.

Hunger persists in Appalachia because jobs are scarce and farming in the infertile soil is rarely profitable.